

Newfoundland and Labrador Judo Association

Developing Competitive Judo Report

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To create an ongoing and systemic High Performance Program (“HPP”) in Newfoundland and Labrador, we must address our biggest challenges and build upon our greatest strengths.

Upon my travels throughout the province, I was very pleased with a number of factors in regards to judo.

1. The large number of enthusiastic children enjoying judo.
2. The general quality of equipment (i.e. facilities and mats)
3. And the enthusiasm and passion of the club coaches truly impressed me.

There are a number of obvious realities that we have to address in our province. The two most glaring challenges I see are (i) the distances that participants have to travel for competition within and out of the province and (ii) the lack of practical experience of the coaches in supplying a variety of programming to meet specific goals and desired outcomes.

I would like to confirm that these challenges are neither unique to our province nor to other provinces in Canada. In fact, there are a number of countries that are dealing with similar challenges, and by utilizing international best practises, along with implementing “home-grown” solutions, I feel we can make a significant impact on both the retention of our junior recreational judoka and those judoka wishing to enter into High Performance Judo.

By increasing opportunities for our top judoka to train and compete with the best in Canada, while still respecting the demands of getting an education, will take a very specific and collective mind set from the Newfoundland and Labrador Judo Association (NLJA), club coaches and the athletes themselves. But this has been accomplished many times in the past in other places and I believe that we as a group have the willingness and expertise to achieve this goal.

Judo Canada (JC) has done an excellent job in designing a Long Term Athletic Development Model (LTAD) for judo. It is now our task to make sincere and extended efforts to educate our club coaches in both the philosophy and practicalities of implementing this program in our clubs. I have witnessed the many benefits of introducing the first 3 stages of the LTAD to children in a club structure and have noticed a dramatic increase in number of participants and retention of those recreational judoka.

It must be remembered that high performance in judo is built upon the combination of physical literacy, athletic abilities and psychological skills (i.e. concentration, relaxation, mental toughness and ultimately the desire to compete). The foundation of these abilities should be nurtured in the earlier stages of LTAD . While these skills are introduced and nurtured in the in Active Start, Fundamentals and Learning to Train stages, they must be refined in the Train to Train, Train to Compete and Train to Win stages of LTAD.

It is also important to remember that a number of these abilities might not have been developed in a judo-specific setting. Regardless, the objective is to consolidate these abilities by the time judoka are introduced to high performance judo. Arguably, developing these athletic and mental abilities outweighs the importance of classical technical and tactical skills, at least until the Train to Train stage of the LTAD.

We must remember that when we are trying to encourage the expansion and retention of our membership that we must realize each participant has their own motivation for starting and staying in judo. As an organization we must try to understand and satisfy the needs of these participants. It is generally understood that the percentage of elite level athletes in any organizations runs around 10% of its total membership with 25% being lesser competitive and 65% being recreational participants and officials. Although many coaches only want to focus on the elite competitive 10%, it is important to understand and realize that if we want to be a successful and thriving organization we must remember to satisfy the needs of majority of our

members. The larger the base of our membership the higher the numbers of elite athletes we will have. It is an ever evolving circle.

This said from what I have seen most judo clubs in the province try to service the gambit of needs within their clubs. We need to ensure this same effort is made by the NJLA to ensure an enjoyable and productive experience when clubs are interacting with each other through the means of clinics, competitions and training camps.



Active Start – U7

Management of the program – Dojo Instructors

Dojo instructors will be asked to familiarize themselves and their Dojo Assistants;

1. Development of Fundamental movement skills (running, jumping, throwing, swimming, tumbling, etc)
2. Introduce the ABC's of Athleticism (agility, balance, coordination, speed)
3. Incorporate suppleness/flexibility exercises in games that also emphasize coordination and agility.
4. Enhance overall feeling of well-being, confidence and self-esteem

Judoka should be participating 1-2 times a week. Classes should run 40-60 minutes.

The emphasis should be on Ukemi and ne-waza; time allocation 60-70% newaza, 30-40% tachi-waza.

The randori should be modified and only in newaza. This can be achieved through games like "Olympic toe Wrestling"

The class should include motor skill 35%, Judo 55% and other (cognitive, mental) 10%. It is important to try to twin motor skill exercises with Judo exercises where possible.

Activities should be Fun and encourage a desire to participate.

Recommendations:

- In club and interclub demonstration events instead of competition would be appropriate and consolidate self-esteem.

Fundamentals – U9

Management of the program – Dojo Instructors

Dojo instructors will be asked to familiarize themselves and their Dojo Assistants;

1. First window of trainability – speed (ages 6-8 girls, ages 7-9 for boys)
2. Further develop flexibility
3. Introduce strength exercises using child's own body weight
4. Introduce power and stamina through games
5. Introduction of Judo Etiquette, rules and concepts of fair-play
6. Develop general awareness of the body and fitness
7. Development and refinements of Movement patterns
8. Avoid unnecessary emphasis on discipline
9. Emphasis of fun and safe environment

Judoka should be practicing 1-2 times a week for a maximum 60 minutes.

Emphasis is on ukemi and newaza. Ne-waza 55-60% and 40-45% tachi-waza.

The Judoka should be introduced to *modified competition, with a maximum of 2 competitions a year.

Recommendations:

- *In club and interclub events giving appropriate opportunities to build confidence, improve self-esteem and feel part of a social group.

Again I cannot stress strongly enough we must ensure the development of physical literacy and fundamentals upon which excellence can be built on in a FUN and nurturing environment!!!!

Learning to Train

The “Learning to train” phase is one of the most important periods for the development of young athletes. It is necessary to pay particular attention to the individual athlete’s needs at this stage.

Because of the contextual reality of judo and the inconsistent rate of children’s development, this very important stage will be divided into 2 sub-stages, specially the U11 (age 9 and 10) and U13 (age 11 and 12)

Learning to Train – Part I U11

Management of the program – Dojo Instructors

Dojo instructors will be asked to familiarize themselves and their Dojo Assistants;

1. Growth and development considerations
2. Optimal window of opportunity for skill training in girls is between the ages of 8 and 11 and the ages of 9 and 12 for boys.
3. Technical development as per syllabus
4. Bilateral development – left and right
5. Develop stamina through games and relays
6. Further develop speed by specific activities emphasizing agility, quickness and change of direction

Judoka should be practicing judo 2-3 times a week for 60-90 minutes a practice (50% standing 50% newaza) with no periodization; sessional and seasonal planning only.

At this stage the judoka should be competing in 4 tournaments a year in a “round robin” format. 2 tournaments should be at the club level and 2 tournaments at the Interclub level only. Emphasis is on gaining experience, and not “winning”.

Learning to Train – Part II U13

Management of the program – Dojo Instructors

Dojo instructors will be asked to familiarize themselves and their Dojo Assistants;

1. Judoka typically choose one of two streams – elite development or recreational participation
2. Optimal window of trainability training in girls is between the ages of 8 and 11 years and between 9 and 12 years for boys
3. Further develop and consolidate basic judo skills
4. In regards to Strength: Females have 2 windows of trainability – immediately after PHV and onset of menarche
5. Stamina: Females develop at the onset of PHV
6. Speed: Second window of trainability for females aged 11-13 years
7. Suppleness: Females – special attention during PHV

Judoka choosing the elite stream should be practicing judo 3-4 a week and the recreational judoka will practice up to twice a week for 60-90 minutes a practice (50-55% tachi-waza, 45-50% ne-waza). 80-90% technical training: 10-20% tactical training.

Increase exposure to formal competition, with modified IJF rules appropriate for this age group. At this stage the judoka should be competing in 4-6 tournaments a year with 4-5 bouts per tournament.

Instructors should further develop mental training with Visualization, goal setting and relaxation.

No periodization.

Recommendations:

Potential Solutions for retaining judoka at this age

- *Separating the class from the U9 as they do not see themselves as children anymore*
- *Have some of the U16 do skill work with them in their class so they have role models*



Training to Train - U15

Management of the program – Dojo Instructors

Dojo instructors will be asked to familiarize themselves and their Dojo Assistants;

1. To both recognize and identify the appropriate training objectives of this developmental stage, and equally important the lack of development of these abilities in their judoka.
2. To then implement training methods to consolidate and refine the ABC's, basic specific judo skills and basic motor skills.
3. To identify windows of trainability, some of which are based on peak height velocity (PHV), and apply appropriate stimuli
4. Attention should be given to adding bilateral development – movement in multiple directions.
5. To increase the athletes' awareness of the value of fitness.
6. To continue to place emphasis on training (not competition)
7. To introduce the possibility of pursuing a career in high-performance judo
8. To emphasize ethical behavior

Judoka should be practicing judo 4-5 times a week for 60-120 minutes a practice (i.e. up to 8 hours judo-specific training per week), 44 weeks of training per year.

At this stage the judoka should be competing in 6-8 tournaments a year with 4-5 bouts per tournament (approx. 30 matches per year).

***In the Train to Train Stage it is often identified as the make or break stage. Done well we can future ignite the passion for competition in our judoka. In contrast if this stage is poorly done we will lose a large number of judoka at this stage. The three major challenges as I see them are:**

1. Socialization

2. **Lack of performance and increase number of injuries relating directly to often a significant and final growth spurt resulting in joint instability and temporary lack of coordination.**
3. **Meeting the demands of the required number of quality matches throughout the year.**

Recommendations:

1. Make specific efforts to build socialization and bonding into every inter-club event
2. Through the use of the Provincial Training center and in combination with the HP Director create a specific joint stabilization work out combined with agility and coordination exercises to nurture the young judoka through the consequence of this final growth spurt
3. Create a systematic strategy to best ensure the volume of quality matches needed in this stage. (see suggestions below)

Breaking down the competitive needs of this age group in our context will take some creative thinking and co-operation from a pool of clubs. By thinking outside the box, I am sure it is possible.

Recommendations:

- simulation matches in the club with referees, score board, etc;
- ladder systems within the club;
- club weekend exchanges;
- re-evaluating our semester to include training 12 months a year;
- attaching camps to tournaments;
- creating more provincial opportunities to compete; and
- Foster more provincial interaction within our fellow Atlantic provinces.

We must create a pool of like-minded clubs that are interested in being trained in implementing the aforementioned program. As well, look at the possibility of co-ordinating with other sports, either through cooperative activities or by creating an alternative sports program that helps develop these opportunities (e.g. playing soccer/rugby on alternate judo nights within the club membership).

In short, it is important to recognize the judoka's major influences during this stage of development: peers, parents and club coaches. The more synergy we can strategically develop within these three influences, the better buy-in and retention we can expect from judoka. We need to develop a strong social component to all judo programs, as well as

educating parents and fellow coaches on the appropriate goals and expectations for this age group.



Training to Compete – U17, U20

While the ages identified take into consideration the IJF-mandated categories, be aware that athletes in this developmental phase could range up to age 21 for females and up to age 23 for males.

Management of the program – Dojo Instructors in coordination with Provincial HPC

Dojo instructors / Provincial Coaches will be asked to implement a program with general objectives;

1. Specialization in competitive judo
2. Attention to ALL physical characteristics and begin to analyze weaknesses in all areas.
3. Holistic approach to training combining physical, psychological, social and cognitive aspects
4. Optimize fitness and sport-specific skills
5. Advanced mental preparation. Development / refinement of all psychological factors leading up to an Idea Performance State
6. Optimize ancillary capacities (e.g. cardiovascular system)
7. Master skills, consolidate and refine and constantly develop and improve new skills and techniques
8. Year-round appropriately structured training.
9. Increased time devoted to competition and competition-specific training
10. Age ranges are PHV – dependent (i.e. developmental vs chronological)

11. Develop individual training plans with double-peak periodization.
12. Speed and suppleness should be continued to be trained

The judoka should be practicing judo 5-6 times a week (3-5 times randori, 2-4 times technical) for 60-120 minutes a practice; minimum 10 hours judo-specific training per week. 45 to 48 weeks of training per year.

At this stage the judoka should be competing in 8 tournaments per year (min 10 per year for U20) with 4-5 bouts per tournament (approx 40 matches per year). These tournaments should give the athlete exposure to national and international level competitors.

The realities of living in a remote club / province and gaining valuable training and competition experience can be very difficult and expensive.

Recommendations:

- simulation matches in the club with referees, score board, etc;
- ladder systems within the club;
- club weekend exchanges;
- re-evaluating our semester to include training 12 months a year;
- attaching camps and clinics to tournaments;
- creating more provincial opportunities to compete; and
- *much more provincial interaction within our fellow Atlantic provinces.



Training to Win – Females 18 +/-, Males 19 +/-

Management of the program – Dojo Instructors in coordination with Provincial HPC

Dojo instructors / Provincial Coaches will be asked to implement a program with general objectives;

1. Ongoing development of technical and tactical skills

2. Refine and maintain all judo skills
3. To maximize ancillary capabilities – Maximize speed, coordination, agility, stamina and explosive power
4. Specialization, specificity and intensity
5. Individualized training of techniques
6. Tactics – incorporate the individuals strengths and exploit opponents weaknesses
7. Strategies to combat different styles of opponents
8. Strength, Stamina, speed and suppleness is always trainable

Judoka should be training 9-15 times a week covering sport specific technical, tactical and fitness training.

4-5 sessions of Judo a week for 48 weeks with an off season break of no more than 3 weeks at a time. The class should be 65-70% tachi-waza, 30-35% ne-waza. Randori at 80%+ MHR (Maximum Heart Rate) at a minimum of 180 hours per year.

Judoka should compete in a minimum 10 competitions (40 fights) per year. This can be reduced once the Judoka reaches their IPS (Ideal Performance State).

Off-mat strength training 1-5 times/week and endurance training 1-3 times/week dependent upon training phase.

Maintain high volume and high intensity. Weight control and nutrition should be perfected by the athlete at this stage of their competitive career.

Multiple periodization as needed.

Recommendations:

At this stage of the athlete's career the judoka may find it necessary to explore long term training opportunities outside the province. Unfortunately at this stage of our Provincial organizations development it would be necessary to find opportunities for our best HP Judoka to find extended high quality training opportunities out of the province. Having said that it is vital for the development of future judoka for the NLJA to take a connective and supportive roll in these elite judoka and give them a large number of opportunities to come back to the province throughout the year and work with younger judoka inspiring to become high performance athletes.



Active for Life

Management of the program – Dojo Instructors

The “Active for Life” stage refers to the fact that judo is a lifelong activity. Participants can be introduced to judo at a later stages of life, redirect their focus from a competitive mind set to a more recreational mind set or returned from an extended hiatus from judo for a variety of reasons, most commonly returning back to the sport after having children and wanting to share in the joy of judo with their child. .

Active for Life Stage offers a variety of opportunities for the older judoka to enjoy judo ie: From meeting twice a week at their local dojo to do a little randori for fitness, or compete on the national or international Stage as a Veteran competitor at the IJF World Veterans Championships.

In the Active for Life stage you will find a variety of reasons the judoka participate in Judo. The more variety we offer in programming the greater potential we have to maintain their interests.

By expanding our coach education program we can broaden the activities to service this cliental.

Activities such as:

- Kata for both competition, grading and personal development is becoming extremely popular among the Active for Life groups.
- As well mentioned earlier there are many opportunities for veterans athletes to compete in veteran’s shiai. It appears the more specific to veterans these events are the better they are attended. i.e. veterans only training camps and competitions linked with age appropriate social events are becoming very popular in Europe.